

MARCH 11, 2022
Friday of the 1st Week of Lent
Ezekiel 18: 21-28; Matthew 5: 20-26

“BE RECONCILED NOW.”

Repentance to be effective we need to do it now, not tomorrow or later or some other time. To make our relationship with God and with other people concrete, we need to follow the commandments of God and do good things today, here, and now. It is not to be scheduled tomorrow, but the essential action is today, present, and now. That's why we have a saying 'Do not postpone doing good things today because maybe tomorrow will not come. Do it now.'

In the first reading Prophet Ezekiel reminded the Jewish captives in Babylon that they need to remain with God if they wanted to be saved. Only in following the commandments, turning away from all sins, they will live. Also, he reminded those righteous people not to fall into sins because even if they done good in the past, the present individual disposition and only these that determined God's judgement because at that moment you rejected God.

“One thing that comes out clearly in the Scriptures, especially the New Testament, is that God has a very short memory. Far from being a defect, it is a quality that very much favours us. The person God sees is the person that I am now. What matters are my relationships with him now. The past, good or bad, is forgotten. There is not a divine account book with credits and debits that have to be balanced out at the end of the day. Judas a chosen apostle was lost because of the final choice he made in life. The thief on the cross with Jesus repents and goes straight to heaven. Some may complain that 'what the Lord does is unjust.' But the reading makes the situation clear: 'When the upright abandons uprightness and does wrong and dies, he dies because of the wrong which he himself has done. Similarly, when the wicked abandons wickedness

to become law-abiding and upright, he saves his own life.' It is not God who condemns us. It is we who make the choice to be with God or to alienate ourselves from him. And God recognises our choice. So, we too need not be anxious about our past. All that matters is how I relate to God today and each day. And the choice to be with God or away from him is all ours. If today I reject God, directly or through the way I relate with those around me, then, however virtuous I have been in the past, I have put him out of my life. If, on the other hand, today I choose God, then I have nothing to fear whatever I may have been guilty of in the past. No matter what we did in the past, it will have no effect on our relationship with God provided we reach out to him here and now. On the other hand, there is no room for complacency. Our past good record can be completely undone by our turning away at any time."¹

The gospel emphasized these things when Jesus said come to term quickly to your brothers and sisters who has something against you, be reconciled right away, before your accuser thrown you into prison. You must do it now, do not postpone it. Maybe it will be too late if you do not act today.

My brothers and sisters, go to confession immediately after you done wrong to God and to our brothers and sisters. Say sorry to our friends and family promptly before it's too late. Let us ask therefore in this Eucharist the courage and strength to come back to the Lord in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and may the abundance of love to our brothers and sisters more important than sins they have committed. Let us ask also that we too can forgive those who wronged against us.

¹ livingspace.sacredspace.ie