

MARCH 15, 2022  
Tuesday of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Lent  
Isaiah 1: 10, 16-20, 27-28; Matthew 23: 1-12

“BE HUMBLE AND SERVE OTHERS”

Our readings for today center on hypocrisy and humility, authority, and responsibility. The more we have, either material wealth or positions in life, we need to be humble and responsible. All these things are God’s gift, we need to take care of it because we are all caretakers of it, maybe next time it will be gone.

Prophet Isaiah reminded the people of his time of the consequences of their sinful act like what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah, embodiment of all evil and horrible to God. God destroyed their sinful cities because of their unrepentant behavior. “But God’s desire is not to condemn but to call his people to genuine repentance. ‘Wash yourselves clean!’ And how are they to repent? By offering still more sacrifices? By going to Confession? By saying a careless Act of Contrition? No, ‘make justice your aim.’ They are to rectify the wrongs done to others, to ‘hear the orphan’s plea, defend the widow.’ In Jewish society of the time, these were the weakest and most neglected of people. There could be no real repentance unless care was taken of the weakest and most needy in society. For us, in Lent, the message is exactly the same. And there is hope. ‘Though your sins be like scarlet, they may become white as snow.’ For those who truly repent – and this is shown by a radical change in their behaviour and in the way they act towards the weak and neglected – total rehabilitation is possible.”<sup>1</sup> And we can also apply it today in our lives: come back to the Lord, forgive sinners, love those who hate us, serve, and help the needy, refugees, and poor. We are called more than ever today.

While in our gospel, Jesus is reminding us ‘to do whatever our leaders teach us and follow it but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach.’ As we know

---

<sup>1</sup> [livingspace.sacredspace.ie](http://livingspace.sacredspace.ie)

authority, position or even possessions entail responsibility not only for ourselves but more for our brothers and sisters around us. We must not follow the examples of scribes and Pharisees who like to be number one, love the honor and best seats and to be recognized always. “Unfortunately, it would be wrong to follow the behaviour of such people especially when they become arrogant and domineering, when they use their authority to draw attention to themselves, to assert their supposedly superior status. When they impose burdens on those ‘below’ them which they themselves do nothing to alleviate. Authority is not for power but for empowering and enabling. Real authority is a form of service, not a way of control or domination or a claim to special privileges. So, Jesus has no time for people who insist on being addressed by their formal titles. As Jesus says, ultimately, we are all brothers and sisters. And elsewhere he tells us that the greatest among us is the one who best serves the needs of those around him rather than the one who has the most impressive titles, or the biggest desk, or eats in the executive dining room, or has his/her picture on the cover of Time or Hello.”<sup>2</sup> We need to be humble in anything and everything because all are from God, and we are all custodians of these things. We do not own it. These things are for the service of all as Jesus said: “The greatest among you will be your servant. All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.”<sup>3</sup>

My dear sisters and brothers, this is what we hope for this Season of Lent, be humble and responsible on things God gave us and repentant as we do wrong to Him and to our brothers and sisters. The choice is ours: submit ourselves to the merciful and compassionate way of God, repent, humble and use everything to serve others and find life, or to go our own stubborn, defiant, rebellious, selfish, egocentric way and find death. May this Lent be our way of changing our ways and remain with the Lord always.

---

<sup>2</sup> ibid

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 23: 11-12 Holy Bible NRSVCE Canadian Bible Society