

Fifth Sunday of Lent

March 18, 2018

As we near the conclusion of the Lenten Season, the word of God focuses our attention more sharply on the approaching death of Jesus. The first reading from Jeremiah sets the tone by describing a new covenant that God will establish with his people. It will not need to be taught each individual person will each person will be directed from within after that transformation takes place. A new covenant will be written on the heart of each man woman and child.

Today's responsorial psalm emphasizes that this new covenant will create a clean heart in every Israelite. Did you ever think about the Old Testament that Jesus read and prayed over the same reading and the psalm that we are experiencing today in our liturgy? This psalm portrays for us King David's response to God after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba and ordered her husband to be killed in battle to cover up his sins. This wasn't even the worst part because he did not see that he had done anything wrong. This seems to us like a modern-day soap opera! David was known as a man after God's own heart. God sent Nathan the prophet to open the eyes of David's conscience. We need the Holy Spirit to convict us of our sins like the Seven deadly sins or even the venial sins which can lead to greater sins if let thrive in one's life. Like David, God continues to be pursues us and reaches out to us in his great love for each one of us. He will help us to confess our sins and will draw us closer to Him. God's mercy cannot be measured. Adultery and murder didn't keep God from fulfilling his promises to make him a great king and allowing David to serve Him. The moment we repent, God's love and mercy will well up in our hearts just as it did for King David. Then David makes a promise to God that he will do his best to lead and care for his people. We pray with David: create a clean heart in me

In St. John's Gospel, Jesus says the hour has come and it is time for the Son of Man to be glorified! The central act of Jesus Christ was his shedding of blood as a sacrifice for us and for all time that we might share in God's life. As Christians,

We can enter into that new covenant in the Mass. In the fullness, of Jesus Christ: body, blood soul and divinity present in the Eucharist, God shares his life with us and offers us an opportunity to respond with Amen. Without sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ, the Mass would be nothing but ritual. It is a joining of heaven with earth, it is union of God's divine life and human life. And there by draws all people to Himself.

Everything is now in place for the coming of Holy Week. The hour has come. He will suffer and die to gain abundant life for all. He knows the pain of this hour and the glory it will bring as he destroys sin and death forever and ever!