

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Feb 20th 2015

The intentions of prayer, fasting and sacrifice for this first Friday of Lent are still strong. Yet we know as we proceed through this Lenten season that we will be tempted to give way to the cacophony of our daily cluttered and complex lives with the result that we can lose commitment and focus. Our minds and spirits are often brought in protest to a spirit of sacrifice that focuses on denial and penance. This is not to say that we should not enter into our prayer life recognizing our sinful nature and our call to repentance. However to sustain an intentional will to the movements of the Holy Spirit, we are called by St. Ignatius to be externally focused as well—to be with and for others.

Isaiah calls for ‘fasting’ in this way:

“Release those bound unjustly” and by “sharing your bread with the hungry,
sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; clothing the naked when you see them.”

Our Lenten fasting and sacrifice should include these elements of our Ignatian spirituality; to seek and promote social justice, to see God in all things and all people and to be moved to personal care for those who God brings into our paths. We should not be so consumed by our own sin, and subsequent penance that we become inwardly focused at the expense of the cry of those who call for us in need.

May our sacrifice this Lent be of our time, talents and treasure in service to God’s kingdom.

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