

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Feb 26th 2021

When a major racial uprising occurred some years back in Los Angeles, a truck driver found himself in the wrong part of town, was dragged from his truck, and nearly died at the hands of his assailants. Later when the trial took place, the man's testimony left a lasting impression. He insisted that he had forgiven his assailants and wished them well. When asked why he had such a tranquil position, he claimed that this is what his faith asked of him and he could do no less.

Ezekiel today presents an interesting picture of conversion: one can be converted to good or to evil. The prophet makes a strong appeal to leave evil behind and embrace the good.

And what does our Gospel say apropos of this topic? It centers wholly on forgiveness, even things that we might consider of secondary importance. But the Gospel does not consider forgiveness secondary. Any spirit of anger, which means holding on to an injury, is excluded. When anger is allowed to fester, the situation worsens, often with forms of invective foreign to the Christian spirit. We are told not to come before the Lord in worship until peace is made. Christians should avoid public litigation and make every effort to settle out of court.

Some people say, "I will forgive, but I won't forget." But this is incomplete forgiveness. In the course of daily life, differences and disagreements are inevitable. But a spirit of animosity gains us nothing and is a constant reproach to our conscience. Often in public prayer we ask God to forgive us as we forgive others. We pray that this be a blessing and not a reproach.

Points to Ponder

The courage to forgive

Forgiveness, a sign of moral strength

Forgiving and forgetting

"Forgive us as we forgive"