

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Feb 24th 2023**

I have to admit that sometimes I feel like the people in today's first reading. I want to shout, "I'm doing my best over here, God. Do you even notice that I'm trying?" We want our efforts to be recognized. We want "credit" for the most fundamental religious observance.

But Isaiah challenges that sort of thinking. He asks us to look at our motivations and at our lives as a whole. Abstaining from meat on the Fridays of lent is a worthy penance, but it can lose its power to convert our hearts if we replace our normal meal with a luxurious seafood feast. It is good to give up our small pleasures to discipline our wills, but not if we do that instead of acting with justice and charity.

Conversion is never only skin deep. It must pervade every corner of our lives. And it will always come at a cost. Following Jesus means following him even to the cross. But we come to the cross knowing that Jesus was there before us and will lead us past the cross and into heavenly light.

Mary Elizabeth Sperry - Bible Diary 2023 - Claretian Communications Foundation, Inc.