

Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Mar 10th 2024

Nicodemus understood little or nothing of what Jesus had said about the need to be "born from above," and was startled about "raising the Son of Man". But for us today, we are able to understand the meaning of this passage: to look at Jesus "lifted up" means "to believe in him" (v. 15), keeping our eyes focused on the love that he has shown while lifted on the Cross.

On the Cross, Jesus proclaims that he has voluntarily made himself a slave for love, a servant of his brothers and sisters even to the point of dying for them and that is how he has overcome the shame of the Cross.

Today the snakes that wound, that poison our existence and endanger our life are pride, envy, resentment and unruly passions. At every moment, we come across snakes that lurk around, but above all within ourselves. They are the cravings for possessions, the frenzy of power, the desire for popularity. But the Gospel gives us this promise: Only an eye turned to Him who was raised on the Cross will heal you from the poison of death injected in the heart of the humans. One day—ensures the evangelist—"they shall look on him whom they have pierced"(19:37) and be saved.

Lent moves forward and we believe it calls on us to repentance and conversion. But Does the season of Lent talk more about our sins? Definitely no! Lent focuses on the love of God. Gospel presents a conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus — As we meditate, delete the name of Nicodemus and add your own name there – as an attentive disciple. John gives us the Golden Words today that we should be written down in our hearts: "God so loved the world so much that he gave his only Son". It speaks of a God who is crazy to love us without measure.

How often have we listened to the phrase, "virtue stands in the middle"? This is the logic of the world - do not take the extremes! But when it comes to God's love, his virtue is in the extreme. The Passion of the Christ is the passionate love.

It is up to us either to accept or reject the love and life that God gives us in Jesus. God does not ask anything of us in return. He gives us the gift of love so that we can live it and share it without measure. What more can we ask for? Lent is about looking up, recognising the love with which God loves us.

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