

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Mar 26th 2024

What is my credential to be a disciple of Jesus?

The first thing I hear in today's Gospel is that phrase that we had spoken too many times when we were children: "I didn't do it." The disciples of Jesus react like children trying to defend themselves to the statement of the Master: "One of you is going to hand me over." They all wanted to look like good children who had never committed mischief.

But the reality is not always how we like it to be. Who has not broken a plate or many plates in their lives? Who can say that they are pure and good; that all their works are upright; that they have never acted out of selfishness; and that their intentions were always good? Look at the behaviour of the disciples. They failed to be faithful to the Lord and they all had their selfish reasons for following Jesus.

Some preachers commented: that Peter was delighted that he had left everything to follow Jesus, but in reality, perhaps he had only left a few nets that he mended a thousand times and a boat that leaked everywhere. They had intentions of obtaining important positions in the Kingdom that Jesus would establish. Remember the story of the sons of Zebedee who wanted the left and the right seats on either side of Jesus?

Let us move from the apostles and look into our lives. Can we claim to be pure and good? Although our lives are in disarray, let us not lose hope. Let us be thankful to the Lord for his mercy and draw energy from the good qualities that the Lord has endowed us with. The Lord knows our infidelities and betrayals but loves us for what we are.

The Liturgy of the Holy Week challenges us to keep our selfishness and arrogance aside. We are no different from those we regard as bad or not well-behaved. We are all in need of mercy, forgiveness, and understanding. Let us not judge anyone, even the betrayal of Judas. We are not any better than him. When we judge our brethren, we don't make ourselves any different from them.

There are two betrayals in today's reading; one by Judas and the other is by Peter. Peter is a representative of the rest of the group. He is our representative. He was too proud of his credentials – "I would never betray you!" Sometimes we are like him – so sure of our righteousness. We hear people comment: "Do not allow this person to serve in the Church, for he has a bad reputation." Really? What makes me worthier or more meritorious than the other person to serve God and his Church? Our only credential shall be our reliance on the mercy of God.