

MARCH 7, 2021 – THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

Jesus drove out those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, and also the money changers from the temple. What was going on in the temple?

Pilgrims visited Jerusalem from all over the world. They had to offer a certain animal to God as a sacrifice. But the law was that any animal offered in sacrifice must be perfect and unblemished. There were the inspectors for these animals. And also there was a fee for this inspection. If anyone had bought an animal outside of temple, it would be rejected after examination. And there was big difference in price between inside and outside of temple. The price in the temple was more expensive, up to fifteen times.

Pilgrims who were all over the world brought coins from Rome, Greece, Egypt, Tyre, Sidon, Palestine, and so on. All kinds of money could be used in the city. However, the temple took Israel money only, because they thought all other currencies were unclean. Therefore, they had to change the money. And the money changers took a big amount of commission.

The people of the temple were supposed to help the Pilgrims, but they misused them for making money. Jesus drove them all out of the temple area. Jesus wanted them to be helper of the Pilgrims. Jesus said, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." He spoke about the temple of his body.

Gathering together, we are the temple of his body. However, there are many moments when we forget our identity. Individually, each one tries to come closer to God, and at the same time each one should help others to come closer to God. If we forget our identity, Jesus wants us to be destroyed, and he will rebuild it again.

In the season of Lent, let us examine ourselves if we offer our thanks to God properly, and if we help others to do their parts. We have to remember that we can be church of Christ only when we are with others.

Fr. James