

REFLECTION

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"Your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you" (Matthew 6:18)

LENT 2020
Ash Wednesday

For the longest time this Gospel, seemed an impossible challenge. As I once understood it, we're called to be ambassadors of Christ, but never boast of Christ's victory in our living as Christians. Alas, if one just looks at the surface story, much is misinterpreted. The task set before us in today's Gospel is not about hiding our Christianity in public; rather, it's about making certain our Christianity is genuine. Christ never did anything for His own glory, but for God's. In like fashion, we're called to live and love for the glory of God, for in doing so, we fully love and live.

None of us get this exactly right. As much as it is human to want to love and live as well as our Beloved Savior, so too is it human to fall short and occasionally seek our own glorification. After all, we do a lot of good, and we deserve to be recognized for it, right? It comes down to motivation and how we choose to serve. Do we live the way we do because we want others to think we're great, serving ourselves? Or do we live in a way that makes our Creator proud, trying to serve as selflessly as Christ did? Are we Christian to everyone but God? Our challenge for growth, then, is to continuously redirect our hearts and motivation toward the glorification of God.

PRAYER

*Create in us clean hearts, oh Love, Hearts that break for what breaks yours,
Hearts that tirelessly pursue you, Hearts that guide our eyes to see like you,
Hearts that guide our thoughts and words,
Hearts of mercy that forgive as swiftly as you do—Both ourselves and others,
Hearts to aid as bravely as you, Hearts that lead our thoughts to you,
Hearts that live for the glorification of God, That we may love like you,
So that in others, we see you, And with others, share agape love,
With a willingness and fervor to follow where you'd call.*

Focus: SOCIAL JUSTICE

Ash Wednesday is one of the most beautiful celebrations of Catholicism; a giant calling home to God's love and push to grow from discomfort. Indeed, today's Gospel calls us to get uncomfortable, and avoid the danger of exploiting our "good Christian living" to overlook the woes of the world. Christ calls us to be disillusioned with the idea of "I do enough" when reviewing our Christianity, and instead shift the paradigm to think, "I am enough." Imperfect as we are, when we surrender to Christ, we're enough for Him to work through us, keeping the "us" in justice before the "I."

SERVICE SUGGESTION

Glorify God each day with five hurts and five heals. Trust Him with five ways you or the world hurts or have caused hurt. In this, we humble ourselves and acknowledge the world's suffering. Then, praise God for five ways you or the world has healed and ask Him to work through you, sowing healing instead of hurt. No mistake you ever make will be bigger than God's love for you. We put His Son on a cross and he still chooses us. When you put your glory ahead of God's, grace yourself, let God love you, and rise again!