

# Theme of the Week - This Sanctuary

Today we enter the third week of Lent and we will start by looking at the most important words from the first reading, "I am the Lord your God... You shall have no gods except me". Our God has a passionate love for us, but our human hearts are often so easily distracted and carried away by the ways of the world and the present. Thus as we move to half way through Lent we should remind ourselves of the cry of Lent "Turn away from sin, turn back to God". Stay faithful, be faithful, return to the Word of God for your sustenance and ignore the call of others in the world.

In the Gospel on Sunday, we see Jesus angered by traders and the merchants who had turned God's house into a marketplace. We know Jesus has a special place for the temple in his heart. Forty days after his birth he was presented at the temple by Mary and Joseph. Around the age of twelve in the Gospel of Luke, we hear of Jesus remaining in the temple whilst Mary and Joseph looked for him. When found, Mary questioned him about why he had made them worry with Jesus replying, "Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I had to be in by Father's house?" Therefore, for Jesus, the temple is a privileged place for an encounter with God, the place of his Father, a house of prayer. The rough commerce of the traders and merchants was offensive, sacrilegious and blasphemous.

In a letter from St Paul to the Corinthians, Paul says our bodies, a gift from God, are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19) and God's will is that we too are cleansed so they can be pure for God. As Jesus in the Gospel rid the temple of the traders who were not there for God, we too should look at our conscience and mind, rid ourselves of our sins and do what is right for God. Through an examination of our lives, sincere repentance, contrition and God's mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation we are healed and cleansed.

On Friday, Fr Chris, Fr Kevin and Fr Pius will come into school during both lunches and offer all Catholics the Sacrament of Reconciliation and for non-Catholics a blessing or simple chat. Take this time as we mark the middle part of Lent to prepare ourselves more fully, to lose the excess baggage that does not relate to God and allow our conscience to be cleansed.

# This Sanctuary

Weekly Reflections  
3<sup>rd</sup> March 2024



## A reading from the Gospel of St John (2:13-25)

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money-changers' coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, 'Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market.' Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture: Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' Jesus answered, 'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said.

During his stay in Jerusalem for the Passover many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he gave, but Jesus knew them all and did not trust himself to them; he never needed evidence about any man; he could tell what a man had in him.

### Day 1

Why do you think it is important during the middle of Lent to reflect back on those words given to us on Ash Wednesday "Turn away from sin, turn back to God"?

How has Lent been for you so far?

### Day 2

When told by St Paul that our bodies are temples, what do you think this means in relation to the Gospel? How does the Sacrament of Reconciliation allow us to cleanse our conscience?

### Day 3

Each day three of each week in Lent will be given to pray two Stations of the Cross:

Station 5: Jesus is judged by Pilate

Station 6: Jesus is scourged with a crown of thorns

## Prayer for the Week

Dearest Father, we pray.  
Help us to do your will with hearts of faithfulness, and in your kindness grant us your servants this grace: that abiding in the love of you and our neighbour, we may fulfil the whole of your commands

Through Christ our Lord

Amen.

**Saint of the week** - Katharine Drexel  
- 3<sup>rd</sup> March



Katharine Drexel put aside her privileged life to be a pioneer in providing education and justice for Native Americans and African Americans in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Katharine used her wealth to found, staff and support nearly 60 schools as well as orphanages across rural areas and inner cities in the Deep South at a time where African Americans did not have access to a basic education. Katharine was:

**Intentional and  
Prophetic**