

## Lent4-B5 Homily by Fr. Gabor

The history of Israel had many dark periods, and one of them is described in today's first reading: the religious leaders were unfaithful to the Lord, the God of their ancestors and they copied pagan customs and shameful practices, and even defiled the temple of the Lord, and of course as a result they misled the people of God, who followed them. This was truly a spiritually dark period. We are living in similar circumstances, surrounded by people who don't believe in God, and legalise practices that are against human life and dignity; and practices that are based on a simplistic understanding of love. If you watch the TV you will hear so called scientists calling human beings as animals, just to say a few examples. Unfortunately we, as God's people are not immune to these ideas, and I have witnessed several times people making statements about sacred realities, for example about marriage, that are completely against the long held teaching of the Church, the Body of Christ.

Jesus points out to Nicodemus, in today's Gospel reading that men prefer darkness to light. Why is that? Why is light not more attractive to some people? Because they already got used to darkness. Jesus says: everybody who does wrong hates the light. It is a human thing that once we got used to something we can find it difficult to let it go. See for example how many of you sit in the same spot in the church every week? How would you feel like if a stranger arrives for Mass before you and takes your seat. You may feel a bit uncomfortable. This used to be a big issue in the past, so even people's names were put on pews. Thanks God this is not such a big issue today. Church culture has moved on and we are more open to change.

Openness to change is what God can use to help us notice if there is any darkness in our lives and lead us out of darkness into his wonderful light. The light symbolises his glory, his life.

So how do we turn to the light during Lent and walk in the Light?

By way of almsgiving, prayer, penance and fasting; fasting not merely from food and TV, but by

- fasting from judging others and feasting on finding Christ in them
- fasting from discontent and feasting on gratitude

- fasting from anger and feasting on patience
- fasting from worry and feasting on trusting God's plans
- fasting from complaining and feasting on appreciation
- fasting from pointing out negatives and feasting on affirming goodness in people
- fasting from bitterness and feasting on forgiveness
- fasting from self-concern and feasting on compassion for others
- fasting from discouragement and feasting on hope
- fasting on lethargy and feasting on enthusiasm
- and so on.

So let not perpetuate in our Church communities the same dark attitudes as what we see around us, even sometimes in our families. Jesus says in today's Gospel reading that 'the man who lives by the truth comes out into the light.' If Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life then living by the Truth means living by Jesus and living in Jesus, we in him and He in us, like two persons in a covenant, which is bonded together by the Holy Spirit. Don't try it alone, because you will be disappointed. Walk towards the light with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and to start your long walk I recommend to everyone that you renew your commitment to Jesus as often as possible, just like good friends do it in various forms; I know from own experience the power of commitment, and how the Holy Spirit helps you through your renewed commitment. You can use the consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, or any other form commitment that you find in the rich treasury of prayers of the church.