

Fr. Michael Video Homily - *The Colors of Love*

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

Since the Passover of the Jews was near,
Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves,
as well as the money changers seated there.
He made a whip out of cords
and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen,
and spilled the coins of the money changers
and overturned their tables,
and to those who sold doves he said,
"Take these out of here,
and stop making my Father's house a marketplace."
His disciples recalled the words of Scripture,
Zeal for your house will consume me.
At this the Jews answered and said to him,
"What sign can you show us for doing this?"
Jesus answered and said to them,
"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."
The Jews said,
"This temple has been under construction for forty-six years,
and you will raise it up in three days?"
But he was speaking about the temple of his body.
Therefore, when he was raised from the dead,
his disciples remembered that he had said this,
and they came to believe the Scripture
and the word Jesus had spoken.

While he was in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover,
many began to believe in his name
when they saw the signs he was doing.
But Jesus would not trust himself to them because he knew them all,
and did not need anyone to testify about human nature.
He himself understood it well.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Homily: The Colors of Love

What are the colors of love?

Today's gospel isn't the soft pastels of the Good Shepherd. There's no smile on Jesus' face.
No lamb in his arms.

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There's fire in his eyes and a whip in his hands.

Jesus isn't afraid to color outside the lines, to make a symbolic mess of things by literally turning over the tables. This is a portrait of righteous anger at the scandalous commerce conducted in God's holy house.

Jesus rails against a corrupt system which lined the pockets of the temple priests, while exploiting all who came to worship, especially the poor.

Jesus knew, no doubt, what such actions would cost him. And still he acted. He needed to drive his point home – His Father's house is not to be turned into a marketplace.

And yet Jesus' anger, justified as it was, is a moment in his ministry, not the whole of it.

This is John, Chapter 2, Jesus has just come from drinking and dancing at the wedding feast at Cana. He will soon meet Nicodemus at night and stretch this teacher's imagination with talk of being born again.

But today, today Jesus expresses his anger, his justified anger -- without getting stuck in it. His attack on money-grubbing is entirely non-violent -- but dramatically pointed.

He acts. And then he moves on...

What injustice in our church, in our country, in our world angers you?
What might the Holy Spirit be calling you to do about it?

One thing is certain, we all need to pray for the wisdom to know when and where and how to act in the face of injustice. Inaction is no virtue.

I sometimes fear raising my voice against injustice. Fearing other voices will rise against me. So I sin in silent complicity.

May the Holy Spirit silence such fears. Loosen our tongues. Unleash our tears.
May we be motivated to move in the kinetic kairos of the Spirit!

May Jesus gift us with His courage, His passion, His conviction.
May we never seek a stagnant peace nor get stuck in abiding anger.

May we dare to dance at the feast and to rage at injustice within our temples. May our hearts beset ablaze with the many colors of His love!

Amen? Amen!