

March 26, 2020
Thursday of the Fourth Week of Lent
JOHN 5:31-47

Activity for today:

- Read Gospel Reflection
- Prayer of the Day
- Prayer Activity
- Challenge of the Day
- Continue to work on Four Day Devotion Worksheets

Gospel Reflection

Gospel Reflection from Fr. Brian Johnson

Welcome to ***Judge Judy's Courtroom!*** She can be very animated about cases, and one time I heard her light up a man before her bench saying, *"Sir, do you think I fell off the cabbage truck yesterday? You didn't bring a witness, and you don't have any receipts, how am I supposed to establish that the defendant owes you even a dime?"* If you have ever watched Judge Judy, you know that while she can speak 'legalese' anytime she wants to, she can also speak very plainly when she has to get a point across to someone. In today's gospel, Jesus is challenged by the Jewish authorities who like Judge Judy demand witnesses and proof about his credentials and identity. Jesus simply says, ***"You want witnesses? Sure, I have witnesses, how may do you want? Is four enough?"*** The Old Testament legal rule was that the truth of a matter could be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Deuteronomy 19:15 says that "a charge shall stand only on the testimony of two or three witnesses". In the mediation method that Jesus taught for 'making peace' in the church, He instructed that if both parties could not be reconciled in a one on one sit-down, then a next step may be to bring in one or two trusted mediators to settle the matter on agreeable terms. In Matthew 18:16, he says, "But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'" So we can see that in scripture it was clear that having a couple witnesses is proof enough of the truth of a claim. So, the Jewish authorities continue to doubt and dispute Jesus over his ministry and teaching, and Jesus simply asks them, "How many witnesses do you want then?" He lists four witnesses in today's reading: 1) John the Baptist (Jn 5:33) 2) the ministry wonders/miraculous works Jesus performed (Jn 5:36) 3) The Father Himself (Jn 5:37) 4) Moses (Jn 5:45-46) All of these testify to Jesus. So, Jesus brings four witnesses, and He does encourage the Jewish authorities to question the witnesses. For example, Jesus notes that they had 'sent emissaries to John' (5:33) and they do 'search their scriptures' (5:39). But because of either their proud or jealous hardheartedness, they fail to accept the testimony

about Jesus. That is the tragedy, they reject Him, and even worse, they go so far as to have Jesus turned over to the Roman Powers for Him to be crucified.

But whose courtroom really matters? This rejection of Jesus is how it plays out in the Jewish authorities' courtroom, but what will happen in the Father's courtroom, when we all stand before the judgement seat of God? In Luke 10:15, Jesus says, "whoever rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me." Do we accept Jesus? What is our testimony? That is the question we all need to answer. Lent gives us time to prepare our witness or prepare our defense. And it is simple enough: Listen to, accept and follow Jesus. Accepting Jesus means we call on Him as our witness. Simple enough, but how is our case coming along this Lent?

Prayer for Today:

Lord, thank you for this time you've given me to read and study your word. I seek to know what you mean for me to apply in my life today. Instruct me and give me a portion of your grace to share with someone else: someone who needs a good word or needs to hear from You through me. You reveal yourself to me through this time and you speak to me what I need to hear. Thank you for loving me and giving this time to me. I need your wisdom and Holy Spirit to keep me open to hear you and to understand your will. I do not rely upon my own understanding, but lean upon your guidance. Show me throughout this day how you continue to speak through each encounter and event I will undergo. Bless each person I meet and allow me to hear you in them, as they share back your grace with me. May you be glorified and served in any witness I give to you in my work and with my family this day. May Jesus be my peace, for it is in His name that I pray, Amen.

Prayer Activity:

Write out a bible verse on a small slip of paper (I know paper is 'old-school'), any bible verse you love and carry the piece of paper in your pocket today and each time you feel rushed or anxious, or hear about someone ill, read the verse twice before putting it back in your pocket.

Challenge:

Can I name as many saints from the history of the Church, as I have friends?

Activity Pages for Children of All Ages:

<file:///C:/Users/Paula/Documents/St%20Pius%20X/Website%20information/four-day-devotion-activity-pages.pdf>

Answers from Monday's Question

1. The Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-12)
2. Cure of the Official's Son (John 4:46-54)
3. Cure on a Sabbath (John 5:1-47)
4. Multiplication of Loaves (John 6:1-14)
5. Walking on Water (John 6:16-24)
6. Cure of a Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)
7. Raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-44)

<https://www.avemariapress.com/engagingfaith/2010/03/signs-in-gospel-of-john-activity/>