

Reflection for Saturday 5 September

In this morning's Gospel reading Jesus is being rebuked by the Pharisees for allowing his disciples to eat ears of corn on the Sabbath. Our Lord then points out to the Pharisees what David did when he and his followers were hungry. He went into the House of God and took and gave to them the loaves of offering which only the priests were allowed to eat. Jesus finally tells the Pharisees that the Son of Man is master of the sabbath. Human need comes before ritual laws.

In his teaching Jesus said that that he had come to fulfil the law, not to destroy it. The Jewish authorities thought he was doing just that by all his criticism of the law. But the Lord was as in fact saying that the law was important in order that the people could be faithful to God. But where they were going wrong was that they only obeyed the letter, the outward observance of it, but their hearts and lives were far from the meaning of the law. In other words, Jesus's fulfilment of it was to be seen in the inward observance of the law. To make his point clear Jesus says In the Sermon on the Mount, Mt.5 part of vs21. "You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment. But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment" part of vs 22. Jesus is saying that anger, the motive behind killing, is liable to the same punishment as that for killing, and is therefore as bad.

The Lord is saying that the mere outward observance of rules, laws, and even of the sacraments, is not sufficient. We do not grow in our relationship with God. We remain the same person. Jesus has given us the sacraments out of his great love for us so that we can grow spiritually. When we receive Jesus in Holy Communion he comes into our hearts and lives and can change us so that we can grow in his ways and become more Christ-like becoming the people he wants us to be. St Paul, in the second chapter of his letter to the Galatians, puts it like this. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son Of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." vs20.

Let us hear what the Lord is saying and doing in our lives.

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