

Jesus is grief-stricken with the sinfulness of heart of the onlookers. His inward distress at their sin and its consequences leads to the outward expression of his anger. On this occasion the anger is in his look, his facial expression. He does not articulate it orally. Nevertheless it is real. Jesus has seen into the hearts of those watching. He knows that their concern is not merely with whether He will cure on the Sabbath. The reason they are watching is because they are: “...hoping for something to charge Him with....” After He had cured the man’s hand “...they went out and began at once to plot with the Herodians...discussing how to destroy Him...”. So serious wrongdoing is afoot. Jesus’ righteous anger is directed against that wrongdoing.

-Stephen Stewart

Entrance antiphon: God is in his holy place, God who unites those who dwell in his house; he himself gives might and strength to his people.

First Readings: Genesis 18 20-32

Psalms 137: Response: On the day I called, you answered me, O Lord.

Second Reading: Galatians 2 12-14

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! The Word was made flesh and lived among us; to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God. Alleluia!

Gospel: Luke 11: 1-13

Memorial Acclamation: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

Communion Antiphon: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all his benefits.



Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Cycle C, 2022

Weekly Reflection: Jesus and Anger

(2) In the first article I discussed two concepts of anger: The first is ‘passionate’

anger with one’s neighbour with the intent of doing him wrong. The second is ‘proper’, or ‘righteous’ or ‘zealous’ anger, directed against vice and at judgment of wrongdoing. It wishes no wrong to a person who may be worthy of punishment. Anger in this sense is based on reason, not on passion, and might therefore no longer be properly described as anger. Passionate anger is always sinful. Proper, righteous anger is not sinful. Indeed, the absence of proper anger may itself be sinful. As Aquinas tells us, a person who is entirely without (righteous) anger when he ought to be angry, imitates God as to lack of passion, but does not imitate God’s punishing by just judgment. St John Chrysostom reminds us that without this type of proper or righteous anger crimes would be unchecked.

These are fine, but critical distinctions. They explain why society needs systems of justice. At the secular level such systems can be justified as protecting the rights and liberties of individuals. But scripture goes further and validates these human systems. St Paul’s letter to the Romans (ch 13) endorses the role of magistrates/judges and says that their authority is there: “to serve God for you and for your good”. He adds, rather starkly: “... the symbol of authority..... is there to serve God, too, as his avenger, to bring retribution to wrongdoers”. So, while it is wrong to desire evil on someone who should be punished, punishment as a corrective of vice and for the good of justice is God’s work. (Aquinas ST: II(ii) L157 C2). In the light of this, let me turn to a first example of Jesus’ anger recorded in the Gospels. People were watching Him in the synagogue waiting to see if he would cure a man with a round at them, grieved to find them so obstinate, and said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ He stretched it out and his hand was restored.”