

## St. Louis Catholic Church

Tuesday of the 2nd Week of Lent

Hear! Listen! Obey! Isaiah counsels the people of Israel to a life of humble submission to the word and will of God. Adhere to God's instructions and cleanse yourself of sins, misdeeds and doing evil. Focus on the needs of others rather than yourself. A great change can take place within the life of his people. Their sins--scarlet--become like snow, white as wool. Hear, listen and obey and you will be nourished by all that God provides. Disregard, turn a deaf ear, do your own thing and the sword will consume you.

We live in a day when we try to control our lives and decide what we want and what is best for our existence. We exalt our own selves by deciding what is right or wrong, what is good or bad, what is our truth and what is unacceptable to do in this new age. We exaggerate our place and calling. We become our own god! We feel that we are self made, bright, informed and in charge of everything.

It is so easy to feel that we know more than the Church or that Her rules are not for today. Religion becomes what we do and not who we are. St. Paul told Timothy, in the early Church, that all of us are called to be holy not according to things done, but according to God's own design. We are made in the image and likeness of God--a little less than the angels--and we have an eternal dimension to our life. We are more than matter, we are also spirit. God's spirit and life was breathed into us and therefore we are immortal.

Even in religion we can see people living in a worldly manner. The scribes and Pharisees were concerned about the external part of religion. They exalted their importance by imposing countless rules on the people, wore flashy robes and relished the titles and respect.

Christ tells the crowd today in the Gospel not to follow their example. Call no one "Father", "Master", "Teacher" or "Rabbi". Christ is not literally saying that titles are never to be used. In our culture, father is the role of our dad and also the spiritual leader in a parish community. We have teachers in school, rabbis serve our synagogues, and generals lead our armies.

In whatever role we have, Jesus calls us to serve One Master, the Christ. As Catholics we are called to serve that Master Who is present in the Church. Sometimes that is a challenge and a great demand. Sometime and often, it is countercultural. Sometime it is simply the Cross. God's ways are not our ways. The wisdom of God is folly to us and the ways of the world are often folly to God.

Lent reminds us to turn back to God's face and away from the culture, world and even our own designs. Instead of being a Master of our Universe we are called to be a servant. That will make us truly great and successful in this world. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Hear! Listen! Obey! Become a great success story. Psalm 50 says "To the upright I will show the saving power of God".

God Bless,  
Msgr. John McArthur