

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money changers'



coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, 'Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market.' Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture:

Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' Jesus answered, 'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said.

During his stay in Jerusalem for the Passover many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he gave, but Jesus knew them all and did not trust himself to them; he never needed evidence about any man; he could tell what a man had in him.

Reflection:

In 20 BC Herod the Great began a massive rebuilding of the temple on a grand scale as a sign of his own Jewish piety and to impress his overlords, the Romans. Herod's temple — its ruins can be seen today in Jerusalem — stood till its destruction by the Romans in 70 AD. Jesus worshipped there, while it was still being built.

Jesus' cleansing of the temple, which three gospels report, was a startling and provocative act. Certainly, his words about destruction triggered an alarm for the guardians of this venerable place and caused them to take steps to stop this trouble-maker from Galilee. If he overturned the tables in the entranceway and drove

people out, what would he do next?

But Jesus claimed he himself was the new temple; he was the new lawgiver who came to fulfill God's command of love. He is God's presence; the Word dwelling among us and in whom we dwell.

The true temple of God is no longer to be found in some holy and far away place but is within, as Jesus has made us all temples of the Holy Spirit and in the process challenges us to know God not through mere ritual observance but 'in Spirit and in truth'

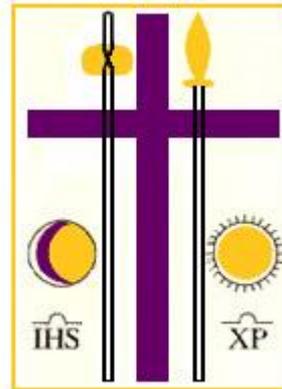
Three questions to ask yourself:

what are the temples that people turn into market places today?

Why is Jesus cleansing these temples?

How is he doing it?

Prayer:



As once you came into the temple, come to us, Lord Jesus, and cleanse us from all that makes us unholy.

Silence the noise that prevents us hearing you, and help us see when we are blind.

Turn over the barriers that

block your word,
drive away the distractions that stop our awareness of you.

Give us the wisdom of your commandments.

For you command only what is good,

We are temples of the living God,

help us to know who we are.

Spirit of truth, sent by Jesus to guide us to the whole truth, enlighten our minds so that we may understand the Scriptures.

You who overshadowed Mary and made her fruitful ground where the Word of God could germinate, purify our hearts from all obstacles to the Word.

Help us to learn like her to listen with good and pure hearts to the Word that God speaks to us in life and in Scripture, so that we may observe the Word and produce good fruit through our perseverance.