

Lenten Reflections

March 10, 2020



St Francis Receiving the Stigmata – El Greco – Public Domain

<https://art.thewalters.org/detail/6457/saint-francis-receiving-the-stigmata-2/>

In today's first reading, we are instructed to,

*“Wash yourselves clean!
Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes;
cease doing evil; learn to do good.”*

WIP or Work in Progress immediately came to my mind. On a daily basis, but especially during the Lenten season, we are called to fine-tune, to look within us and change something no matter what point of the journey. This may be one less eye roll, one less angry word, one less dramatic response. How easy is it to carry on with no tweaking, no self-reflection, no work toward better - but how amazing is it to tweak, self-reflect, and actually DO better? What glories await us in those disciplines? A WIP is perhaps the greatest state, for it tempts us to movement, tantalizes us to react, and transforms us to what we are truly intended. May we always be WIPs that shape us into our true selves!

Humility. Today's gospel reading jolted me to the days of my childhood when my grandmother instilled the mantra, “Never toot your own horn.” From a very young age, my grandmother and mother taught me to live humbly, to let others speak niceties if they saw fit, to smash the ‘only child’ stigma! I think that is why to this day my greatest pet peeve is those who adjust the spotlight on themselves. Living humbly does not mean living with no self-worth or no pride in our accomplishments. Rather, living humbly means that each day, we look deep into our souls and maintain that everything we do is for God, others, and ourselves so that we properly honor all three. In doing so, there is absolutely no need for self-praise. People see, simply by our example, the goodness that lies within and not a word need ever be touted. Praise from others comes naturally, and when it does, we can sit back, beam inwardly, and know our presence is doing exactly what it should!

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Tuesday of the Second Week of Lent

Lectionary: 231

Reading 1 [IS 1:10, 16-20](#)

Hear the word of the LORD,
princes of Sodom!
Listen to the instruction of our God,
people of Gomorrah!

Wash yourselves clean!
Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes;
cease doing evil; learn to do good.
Make justice your aim: redress the wronged,
hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow.

Come now, let us set things right,
says the LORD:
Though your sins be like scarlet,
they may become white as snow;
Though they be crimson red,
they may become white as wool.
If you are willing, and obey,
you shall eat the good things of the land;
But if you refuse and resist,
the sword shall consume you:
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken!

Responsorial Psalm [50:8-9, 16BC-17, 21 AND 23](#)

R. (23b) **To the upright I will show the saving power of God.**

"Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you,
for your burnt offerings are before me always.
I take from your house no bullock,
no goats out of your fold."

R. **To the upright I will show the saving power of God.**

"Why do you recite my statutes,
and profess my covenant with your mouth,
Though you hate discipline
and cast my words behind you?"

R. **To the upright I will show the saving power of God.**

"When you do these things, shall I be deaf to it?

Or do you think that I am like yourself?

I will correct you by drawing them up before your eyes.
He that offers praise as a sacrifice glorifies me;
and to him that goes the right way I will show the salvation of God."

R. **To the upright I will show the saving power of God.**

Verse Before The Gospel [EZ 18:31](#)

Cast away from you all the crimes you have committed, says the LORD,
and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.

Gospel [MT 23:1-12](#)

Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying,
“The scribes and the Pharisees
have taken their seat on the chair of Moses.
Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you,
but do not follow their example.
For they preach but they do not practice.
They tie up heavy burdens hard to carry
and lay them on people’s shoulders,
but they will not lift a finger to move them.
All their works are performed to be seen.
They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels.
They love places of honor at banquets, seats of honor in synagogues,
greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation ‘Rabbi.’
As for you, do not be called ‘Rabbi.’
You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers.
Call no one on earth your father;
you have but one Father in heaven.
Do not be called ‘Master’;
you have but one master, the Christ.
The greatest among you must be your servant.
Whoever exalts himself will be humbled;
but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”